(No. XXII.)

THE PASTIME.

SCHENECTADY, TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 1807.

ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For the Pastime.

A FRAGMENT.

The events disclosed in the following occured a few years since.

FREDERICK was returning from Europe, to the young and beautiful Cordelia. He had long been absent. The blue hills of home already rose to view—his heart beat high with expectation —Hope promised him immediate felicity, and the breeze that played in the swelling canvas seemed to confirm her whispers. But they encountered the ship of an enemy—they fought—and many a gallant hero died bravely in his country's cause! After a battle, long and bloody, superior force compelled Frederick to strike. With reluctance he resigned his sword, and as he gave it up, bedew'd it with a tear. He was cast, alone, into the dungeon of the ship; for his superior courage had exasperated the ignoble and unfeeling enemy.

The sun was sinking beneath the western main; the sky was serene; the waves were in gentle commotion; the bustle of battle had subsided; and Frederick was left to muse on the melancholy vicissitude of fate. His hopes had fled; he saw nothing in the prospect but gloom and terror; he felt the phrenzy of despair working in his brain. In an agony of grief he drew from his pocket a small flute which he bore constantly about him, and poured out the melancholy of his soul in the wild notes that first fell from it. They were wild indeed, but soft and touching; they floated in the still breezes of evening; they reached the conqueror's ear, and melted his heart. He demanded the musician's name. He called Frederick before him—released, and restored him to his home. With eager joy he flew to his Cordelia. He placed his flute in the same hall where he said his devotions, and, decking it monthly with fresh gathered laurel, at every twilight plays symphonies of gratitude to the God of music!

For the Pastime.

IMAGINATION.

Most exquisite pleasures are derived from a lively imagination, if the possessor knows how to command it. Properly directed, it is a source of delight, refined, innocent, and harmless; but, uncurbed by reason and reflection, the greatest of curses. He

whom Heaven has endowed with a vivid fancy, stands upon the brink of a precipice, while the dull, leaden souled herd plod along in the beaten path, far, very far beneath him. His view is more extensive and sublime, his enjoyments more extatic, but his situation more dangerous. A single mis-step may dislodge him. From the height of pleasure, whence the prospect of life was variegated with the gayest scenes, if he falls, that same imagination which exalted his pleasures, now paints him to himself supremely wretched, and drives him to despair. Even that hope, which is cherished by the poor wretch trembling under the axe of the executioner, is denied him. "Which way he flies is *Hell—himself* is *Hell*"—for when he turns his thoughts inward, he traces the source of his sufferings to his own imprudence!

EPISTOLARY.

We this day commence a series of letters addressed by the unfortunate Major Andre to Miss Seward, a celebrated British poetess. They were written at the age of eighteen, when his heart beat high with expectation; when "the young blood ran frolic through his veins, and all was sunshine!" A few copies were many years since thinly scattered by pamphlet pedlars and ballad women; of course, they are very partially known. While virtue can create esteem, or greatness render man immortal, the memory of Andre will be honored, and all that relates to it, read with attention, and cherished with care.

LETTER I.

CLAPTON, *October* 3, 1769.

From their agreeable excursion to *Shrewsbury* my friends are by this time returned to their beloved *Litchfield*.—Once again have they beheld those fortunate spires, the constant witnesses of all their pains and pleasures. I can well conceive the emotions of joy which their first appearance from the neighboring hills, excite after absence—they seem to welcome you home, and invite you to reiterate those hours of happiness, of which they are a species of monument. I shall have an eternal love and reverence for them. Never shall I forget the joy that danced in HONORA's eyes, when she first shewed them to me from the Needwood Forest on our return with you from Buxton to Litchfield. I remember she called them the *Ladies of the Valley*—their lightness and elegance deserve the title. Oh! how I lov'd them from that instant! My enthusiasm concerning them is carried farther even than yours and HONORA's, for every object that has a pyramidal form, recalls them to my recollection, with a sensation, that brings the tear of pleasure into my eyes.

How happy must you have been at Shrewsbury! only that you tell me, alas! that dear HONORA was not so well as you wished

during your stay there.—I always hope the best. My impatient spirit rejects every obtruding idea, which I have not fortitude to support—Doctor Darwin's skill, and your tender care, will remove that sad pain in her side, which makes writing troublesome and injurious to her; which robs her poor **Cher Jean* of those precious pages, with which, he flatters himself, she would otherwise have indulged him.

So your happiness at Shrewsbury scorn'd to be indebted to public amusements—five virgins—united in the soft bonds of friendship!—How I should have lik'd to have made the sixth! —But you surprize me by such an absolute exclusion of the beaux—I certainly thought that when five wise virgins were watching at midnight, it must have been in expectation of the bridegroom's coming. We are at this instant five virgins, writing round the same table—my three sisters, Mr. Ewer, and myself. I beg no reflections injurious to the honour of poor *Cher Jean*. My mother is gone to pay a visit, and has left us in possession of the old coach; but as for nags, we can boast of only two long-tails, and my sisters say they are sorry cattle, being no other than my friend Ewer and myself, who, to say truth, have enormous pig-tails.

My dear Boissier is come to town; he has brought a little of the soldier with him, but he is the same honest, warm, intelligent friend I always found him. He sacrifices the town diversions, since I will not partake of them.

We are jealous of your correspondents, who are so numerous —yet, write to the Andres often, my dear JULIA, for who are they that will value your letters quite so much as we value them? The least scrap of a letter will be received with the greatest joy —write therefore, though it were only to give us the comfort of having a piece of paper which has recently passed through your hands—HONORA will put in a little postscript, were it only to tell me that she is *my very sincere friend*, who will neither give me love nor comfort—very short indeed, HONORA, was thy last postscript!—But I am too presumptuous; I will not scratch out, but I *un*say—from the little there was I received more joy than I deserve. This *Cher Jean* is an impertinent fellow, but he will grow discreet in time—you must consider him as a poor novice of *eighteen*, who, for all the sins he may commit, is sufficiently punished in the single evil of being 120 miles from Litchfield.

My mother and sisters will go to Putney in a few days to stay some time. We none of us like Clapton—I need not care, for I am all day long in town; but it is avoiding Scylla to fall into Charybdis. You paint to me the pleasant vale of Stow in the

* A name of kindness, by which Mr. Andre was often called by his mother and sisters, and generally adopted by the persons mentioned in these letters.

richest autumnal colouring: In return I must tell you, that my zephyrs are wafted through cracks in the wainscot; for murmuring streams, I have dirty kennels; for bleating flocks, grunting pigs; and squalling cats, for birds that incessantly warble. I have said something of this sort in my letter to Miss Spearman, and am twing'd with the idea of these epistles being confronted, and that I shall recall to your memory the fat knight's love-letters to Mrs. Ford and Mrs Page.

JULIA, perhaps thou fanciest I am merry—Alas! But I do not wish to make you as doleful as myself; and besides, when I would express the tender feelings of my soul, I have no language which does them any justice; if I had, I should regret that you could not have it fresher, and that whatever the one communicates by letter must go such a roundabout way, before it reaches one's correspondent; from the writer's heart through his head, arm, hand, pen, ink, paper, over many a weary hill and dale, to the eye, head and heart of the reader. I have often regretted our not possessing a sort of faculty which should enable our sensations, remarks, &c. to arise from their source in a sort of exhalation, and fall upon our paper in words and phrases properly adapted to express them, without passing through an imagination whose operations so often fail to second those of the heart. Then what a metamorphose should we see in people's style! How eloquent those who are truly attached! How stupid they who falsely profess affection! Perhaps the former had never been able to express half their regard; while the latter, by their flowers of rethoric, had made us believe a thousand times more than they ever felt: but this is whimsical moralizing.

My sisters Penserosos were dispersed on their arrival in town, by the joy of seeing Louisa and their dear little brother Billy again, our kind and excellent uncle Giradot, and uncle Lewis Andre. I was glad to see them, but they complained, not without reason, of the gloom upon my countenance. Billy wept for joy that we were returned, while poor *Cher Jean* was ready to weep for sorrow. Louisa is grown still handsomer since we left her. Our sisters, Mary and Anne, knowing your partiality to beauty, are afraid that when they shall introduce her to you, she will put their noses out of joint. Billy is not old enough for me to be afraid of in the rival way, else I should keep him aloof, for his heart is formed of those affectionate materials, so dear to the ingenuous taste of JULIA and her HONORA.

I sympathize in your resentment against the Canonical Dons, who stumpify the heads of those good green* people, beneath whose friendly shade so many of your happiest hours have glided away; but they defy them; let them stumpify them as much as they please, time will repair the mischief; their verdant arms will again extend, and invite you to their shelter.

* The trees in the cathedral walk in Litchfield.

The evenings grow very long; I hope your conversation round the fire will sometimes fall on the Andres; it will be a great comfort that they are remembered. We chink our glasses to your healths at every meal: Here's to our Litchfieldian friends, says Nanny; Oh--h, says Mary; with all my soul, says I; allons, cries my mother; and the draught seems nectar. The libation made us begin our uncloying theme, and so beguile the gloomy evening.

Mr. and Mrs. Seward will accept my most affectionate respects—My male friend at Litchfield will join in your conversation on the Andres. Among the numerous good qualities he is possessed of, he certainly has gratitude, and then he cannot forget those who so sincerely love and esteem him; I, in particular, shall always recall with pleasure the happy hours I have passed in his company; my friendship for him, and for your family, has diffused itself, like the precious ointment from Aaron's beard, on every thing which surrounds you, therefore I beg you would give my amities to the whole town.—Persuade HONORA to forgive the length and ardor of the inclosed, and believe me truly your affectionate and faithful friend.

J. ANDRE.

SCRAPS.

How grateful is the tranquility of occupation! It detaches from many evils; from the listlessness of existence, the pangs of recollection, and the miseries of dependance!—*Port Folio.*

A tobacconist having made a fortune by his business, resolving to set up his carriage, consulted a classical friend respecting a proper *motto*, adding that he was afraid he should be accused of ostentation, and laughed at by his less fortunate neighbors. Never mind that replied the friend, I can give you a motto that will silence them. The carriage was started, and the words "*quid rides*," appeared in conspicuous characters on the pannel. Those who understood Latin, and were disposed to ridicule the new made gentleman, felt the reprimand. But the crowd, taking it for English, shouted as he passed, *Quid rides! Quid rides!*

Rest assured, that, in the exercise of social and religious duties, the mind will find her solid happiness. Wandering in restless search, like Noah's dove, 'tis here she finds at length the welcome olive, the branch whose verdure blooms for immortality. Should you doubt the assertion, be prevailed on at least to try the experiment.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE.

LEMUEL BLAKE, of Boston, proposes to publish by subscription the most perfect and superb edition of Shakespeare that has yet appeared. It will be printed page for page with the last London copy, containing all the notes, prefaces and advertisements, of all the commentators; revised and augmented by *Isaac*

Reed. with a glossarial index and plates. The London edition sells for *seventy-five* dollars; *this*, will be published in 42 semi-monthly half volumes, octavo, at 87½ cents each, payable on delivery. The specimen of typographical execution, given in the Prospectus, surpasses every thing that has yet issued from the American, and rivals the most superb typography of the English press. We may bestow like eulogy upon the advertisement of the Boston publisher, which we now transcribe.

Notwithstanding the multiplied editions of SHAKSPEARE, the publisher, in presenting a new and beautiful impression to the public, comprizing the critical remarks and historical illustrations; the salutary retrenchments and the valuable emendations of his numerous and learned editors and commentators, presumes that he is not idly engaged in a work of supererogation.

It will, undoubtedly, be expected that some reasons should be suggested to warrant the publication of the projected edition; and some arguments urged to shew that it is entitled to encouragement, and ought to be rewarded with success.

The editions, which have been republished in America, contain but a small number of the illustrative and emendatory notes, which are appended to the best British editions; and from the style of their impression, seem rather calculated for the closet of the mendicant student, than the library of the munificent patron.

The proposed impression will include all the notes of *Rowe, Pope, Theobald, Hanmer, Warton, Farmer, Mason, Blackstone, Ritson, Henley, Tollet, Heath, Douce, Percy, Harris, Henderson, Whalley, Warburton, Johnson, Steevens, Malone, &c. &c.*; also those of *Reed*, the last editor, with the various readings of the folio and quarto editions. The last, is now justly esteemed, as the only genuine edition of the AVONIAN BARD.

The most successful method of republishing works of magnitude, is now ascertained to be by subscription and in numbers. This method affords an opportunity to the gentlemen and scholars of the country, gradually, to supply their libraries with the best editions of the best authors, and in a manner the least burdensome. It enables the publisher to proceed with alacrity in his undertaking, without incurring the risk of insolvency. It induces him to persevere with unremitted exertions to answer the expectations of his subscribers.

The works of SHAKSPEARE have passed the ordeal of two centuries, and are passing down the current of time with undiminished honours. He has received no rude shock from the envious malignity of criticism; and his poetical fame is so permanently established, that his laurels cannot be rendered more verdant by the copious contributions of the incense of the learned. Necessity was the parent of his earliest efforts; and when he obtained bread and popularity he was satisfied with his exertions. Like other dramatick writers, he indubitably acquired much celebrity, in his own time, by allusions to living persons, who are long since numbered with the dead; and by a recurrence to prevailing fashions, which passed away with the evanescent moment which gave them birth. No fortuitous combination of circumstances now conspire to exalt his fame. He is the oracle of no sect; the tutelary saint of no party. He is now tested only by intrinsic excellence and his undisputed claim to originality. When he retired from the concerns of the drama, his humanity prompted him to abandon his productions

to the players, who mutilated his scenes and corrupted his text; exiled his characters, and remodelled his plots, as interest, or ignorance; as convenience, or caprice predominated. This was only the inceptive stage in the progress of irreparable waste, which was committed upon Shakspeare by the Goths of literature; for he suffered as much, in print, from the incompetence of his first editors, as he did in manuscript from the license of the players. But at length a series of illustrious annotators arose, and ejected what was spurious, and reclaimed what was genuine, explained what was intricate, and solved what was doubtful, and by labour and ingeunity restored sense and consistency to the pages of Shakspeare. Probably no writer, destined to immortality, was ever so regardless of his fame; or so little restrained by rule. Posthumous renown was wholly extraneous to his consideration; and he was neither fettered by authority, nor trameled by precedent. In his compositions, as he had no model; his excursive genius ranged unrebuked; for the adoption of the ancient dogmas was yet neglected; and modern criticism had not promulged her canons. It therefore follows that his defects and excellences are peculiarly his own. He presided over the audiences of his day with the magical wand of his own Prospero; and ages have not subdued his powers of enchantment; for with an unrivalled force and felicity of expression, he had more knowledge of the artificial modes and real occurences of life; and more of the general laws of nature, as they are exemplified in the operations of human passions, than any other poet. He seized what was transitory, and imbodied what was permanent; and nothing seems to have been wanting, but diligent attention, to have rendered his plays as perfect as they are imperishable. Even where he is most defective, and in the scenes of his greatest obscurity, occasional flashes dispel the surrounding darkness, as the flames of Vesuvius dissipate the clouds which hover on his brow. In those scenes, where, without effort, he apparently aims at nothing beyond popular applause, he sports without a competitor, like Leviathan on the deep; but when he rises in the majesty of his genius, he appears like the Sun's coursers in their radient ascension, extinguishing all the minor lights of Heaven.

ORIGINAL POETRY.

Mr. Editor,

I send you the following, by a very young lady, without the writer's consent. If you think its merit entitles it to publication, I will answer to the authoress for the theft. Yours, &c.

W—t—n.

For the Pastime.

ON MISS E***** B******* OF W** ****N, *a young lady both deaf and dumb.*

They call'd the girl, Misfortune's child,
With look intelligent, tho' wild,
And softly meek,
On all she kindly, sweetly smil'd,
And she was fair, and blithe, and gay,
And lovd'd to frolick, laugh, and play,
But could not speak,
Nor word was ever known to say!

No friendly sound e'er sooth'd her ear—
Yet were there those to her most dear;
The warm embrace
Reveal'd it, and the parting tear!
The often downcast, beamy eye,

Original Poetry.

The rising blush, when H*** was nigh,
That ting'd her face,
Bespoke her form'd for sympathy !
The world, to her, look'd fair and bright,
And nature's beauties charm'd her sight :
With raptur'd soul,
She gaz'd, and smil'd in mute delight,
To mark the lofty mountain's brow,
Or trace the streams that winding flow,
And murmuring roll,
In circuit, round its base below.
How happy ! for she could not hear
The tongue that slander'd those most dear ;
How very blest
That deaf to flatt'ry was her ear !
How small her lot of earthly woe !
And pure and spotless shall she go,
In holy rest—
Joy endless, and eterne, to know.

For the Pastime.

UPON A PAINFUL INTERVIEW WITH A MAD GIRL.

As yesterday I wayward stray'd
In lonesome, contemplative mood,
I met a poor, distracted maid,
Near her lov'd haunt, the gloomy wood.
All morn, beneath the fervid sun,
She'd wander'd o'er the russet plain,
Me, seeing, she appear'd to shun,
As if with horror and disdain.
Her face was worn and wan to view,
It languish'd with a trembling tear—
On vacancy her eye she threw,
And staring—started back with fear.
Then laugh'd—then with a heavy sigh,
Thus she a wither'd rose address'd :
"Thoughtless, I destin'd you to die,
" How could you bear this burning breast ?"
Now with a witching look she said,
" My Thomas will come home to day,
" His bird sung so above my head,
" And Thomas would'nt a bird betray."
At this, she shuddering, utter'd loud,
" Ah no ! he's dead—we ne'er shall meet—
" But yes, he smiles in yonder cloud—
" Wait, wait, I'll bring my winding sheet."
With that she ran—then made a stop,
And stoop'd, as if oppress'd to breathe ;
I thought her fainting—'twas to crop
Some daises wild, to form a wreath.
And as she twisted them around,
She sung so soft, so sweet a ditty,
I thrill'd at every melting sound,
And felt affection blend with pity !